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**CYBERBULLYING: EFFECT ON WORK PLACE PRODUCTION**

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**ABSTRACT**

*Cyber bullying affects many adolescents and teens on a daily basis; it is a form of violence that can do lasting harm to people at different ages and social status in a society. Cyber bullying is real experience that has been in existence for a quite a long time; Bullying statistics show that cyber bullying is a serious problem among teens and gaining roots among*

*adults. By being more aware of cyber bullying, teens and adults can help to fight it. Cyber bullying involves using technology, like cell phones and the Internet, to bully or harass another person. The introduction of social media and other communication systems has seen several people being bullied online by those who are already proficient on the platforms. The reasons behind cyber bullying might or might not be mala-fide but its existence isn't in the best interest. It has been looked at mainly from the teens' effect both in physical and psychological perception not realizing that adults are also equally affected. The impact on adults comes in different forms and has serious impact on the families and work places. The impact at work places affects productivity due to psychological trauma, legal involvement, shame/embarrassment whenever it goes public. Some people have gone to point of resigning from jobs, others have buried themselves into work for fear of victimization, others have committed suicide - At whatever level of status in society there is a great repercussion that is if situation is not put under control the victim can easily go down to a total down trend. Cyber bullying has fatal consequences and existing laws about it are woefully lacking despite some legal measures having been put in place but it gets tricky especially if the cyber bully is anonymous. There are cybercrime cells that help in preventing cyber bullying or minimize the happenings to set up a good working environment that may increase individual productivity and increase organisations profits.*

## INTRODUCTION

Human resources (employees) vary in their personalities and these differences persuade the way they act in response to the internal and external pressures that subsist in many business entities. Most of them spend more than 50% of their working hours at the workplace and its environment greatly influences their performance and mental framework. It has been observed that this mental framework has a direct impact on their individual performance which ultimately affects the organization as a whole (Nag, 2016).

In consequence it is important for an organization to identify the factors that have a crippling outcome on the performance of an employee at the workplace and make suitable corrections. According to Nag (2016) some of the influencing factors among others may include; Personality or Ego Clashes, Stress, Heavy Workloads, Inadequate Resources, Lack of Clarity about Accountability, Gossip, Poor Selection or Pairing of Team Members, Outdated Technology, Bullying or Harassment and perceived discrimination.

High employee productivity is the heartbeat of a successful business. When employees are distracted and unhappy, their work suffers, and ultimately so does the company not mentioning the place of rest and reflection - home. When employees experience problems, they don't perform to their highest

potential. Troubled employees often call in sick or aren't mentally present when they attend to work. Understand the top factors of employee unhappiness and offer appropriate assistance if needed (Hassell, 2015).

As stated above bullying and its enhanced technological act cyberbullying is one of the main contributing factors to poor or low level performance in an organisation - work place. Bullying is an all-encompassing issue among children, adolescents and adults and it can take many forms, including verbal -like name calling, physical -like hitting, sexual -like harassment or stalking, and relational - like social isolation. Despite the extensive literature on bullying, the definition of bullying is relatively ambiguous and is often mistakenly defined as aggressive behaviour, neglecting various aspects and forms of bullying (Cuadrado-Gordillo, 2012). Three factors that distinguish bullying from aggressive behaviour: repetition of unwanted behaviour, an imbalance of power, and the intent to cause a person physical, social, emotional, or psychological harm (Craig & Pepler, 2007; Cuadrado-Gordillo, 2012; Erling & Hwang 2004; Grigg, 2010; Olweus, 1993; Tokunaga, 2010).

Bullying and harassment may be considered to be one and the same - it's all violence since when you are harassing someone, you are doing threatening or intimidating, and I believe bullying is exactly the same thing. Making reference to the legal definition of harassment as being tied to prohibited grounds of the human rights code i.e. harassment typically refers to

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protected grounds of human rights, whereas bullying doesn't usually discriminate based on any protected grounds of human rights which is more used on adults rather than young people.

For a long time bullying was associated with boys who are often seen as portraying more aggressive behaviour right through child growth. On the other hand females, were seen as being involved in more subtle and indirect forms of aggression, such as verbal and emotional bullying (Salmivalli & Kaukiainen, 2004; Smith & Sharp, 1994). Of late the act is still going on in different forms and being enhanced by online operations. This makes it have a global effect by people of different races and class - economic status. It has been outlawed in many countries like Kenya but still some school students have gone beyond administrative restrictions and laws to attack their colleagues. Although the percentage of bullying in schools decreases as students get older (Eslea & Rees, 2001; Whitney & Smith, 1993), the forms of bullying may become more complex and subtle with increasing age. Developments in technology, individuals who are using instant messaging, e-mail, websites (e.g., Twitter, Facebook), text messages, personal digital assistants, or other electronic media, are provided with different ways of communicating with one another, and also a new way of coming up with associations. The technology is being used for entertainment but can also be quite destructive. With an increase in new technology, adults are provided with new methods of targeting peers, a form known as *cyberbullying* also referred to

as *online bullying*, *online harassment*, and *cyber harassment*, occurs when an individual is causing harm toward someone else through the use of an electronic medium (Wade & Beran, 2011). This type of behaviour often occurs in a hostile, intentional, and repetitive manner (Dehue, 2013). Repetition does not necessarily involve only the primary perpetrator, as others may repeat the act of the primary perpetrator, to further target the victim (Slonje, Smith, & Frisén, 2013). Cyberbullying can be inform of; *Flaming*; Online fights using electronic messages with angry or vulgar language, *Harassment*; repeatedly sending nasty, mean, an insulting messages. *Denigration* - "Dissing" someone online. Sending or posting gossip or rumors about a person to damage his or her reputation or friendships. *Impersonation* - Pretending to be someone else and sending or posting material to get that person in trouble or damage their reputation. *Outing* - Sharing someone's secrets or embarrassing information or images online. *Trickery* - Tricking someone into revealing secrets or embarrassing information and then sharing it online. *Exclusion* - Intentionally and cruelly excluding someone. *Cyberstalking* - Repeated, intense harassment and denigration that includes threats or creates significant fear (Willard, 2006).

In contrast to traditional bullying, cyberbullying can be particularly problematic as it can be done fairly quickly, "anonymously, or through impersonation" (MacKay, 2012, p.39). There are two particular ways in which perpetrators cyberbully: either directly or by proxy (e.g., involving others in the

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cyberbullying act). The latter approach is often considered as being more severe, as it involves more individuals in the violence. This is facilitated by easy access to communication technology among different people in different parts of the world with no or minimal control on the usage.

### **Differences between Cyberbullying and Traditional Bullying**

There is a general feeling that face-to-face bullying has greater indications of threat than cyberbullying, mostly due to the presence of immediate physical threat. The presence of physical threat increases the intimidation factor where the person isn't getting away. Despite this Cyberbullying is still just as bad but it removes the immediate threat of physical harm. It is more technological and an enhanced or rather a process of transformation of traditional bullying. It is vital to discover and investigate the underlying factors that play a role in cyber bullying in order to create successful intervention programs. Slonje et al., (2013) follow a line of investigation to find answers that explain the factors that differentiate cyberbullying from traditional bullying; which include among others: technological proficiency, the indirect nature of cyberbullying, increased number of bystanders, it is ability to spiral to wider audiences, and it may be more difficult to escape from the violence, since certain acts (e.g., posting of a photo) can remain online indefinitely (Smith, 2012) and social media like Facebook will bring them back as memories after a period of time repetitively.

Cyberbullying is not restricted to the workplace only as employees can use social media platforms and other communications to engage in annoying behaviour well beyond the confines of the physical workspace and conventional working hours. That indicates that a bully has wide spread time and multiple avenues to carry out their act and even hide their identity which makes the situation even worse for the victim – legal and social help may not be forthcoming. Cyberbullying makes use of the global network and at times the contents are made viral spreading all over to the detriment of the victim. According to Kowalski & Limber (2007), electronic bullying has specific features that differentiate it from traditional forms of bullying, such as its anonymous nature and the ability to use various screen names, which may attract people to engage in this type of bullying, over other forms of bullying. The lack of supervision in adolescent's Internet access is also another risk factor and difference between cyberbullying and traditional bullying (Dehue, 2013). Lack of control to the technological use makes the activity to be lucrative to bullies and the reverse to the victims. Although cyberbullying is less prevalent than traditional bullying (Low & Espelage, 2013; Ybarra, Boyd, Korchmaros, & Oppenheim, 2012), studies have found cyberbullying victimization and perpetration rates to range from 10 to 50 percent (William & Guerra, 2007; Ybarra, Espelage, & Mitchell, 2007).

While hosting the first White House Conference on Bullying Prevention President Barack Obama (2011) stated,

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"As adults, we all remember what it was like to see kids picked on in the hallways or in the school yard. And I have to say, with big ears and the name that I have, I wasn't immune...we overlook the real damage that bullying can do" (White House, 2011).

The purpose of the conference was to educate students, teachers, coaches and parents on how to identify and explain the effects of cyberbullying. Furthermore, bullying is problematic for Americans and the practice of cyberbullying can only become obsolete with the help and involvement of all individuals functioning in today's society. (White House, 2011).

The expansion of societal knowledge grows considerably as bullying behaviors grow globally. As a result, this social phenomenon is no longer a secret or a whisper among college, universities, outreach programs, the health system, state and governmental institutions, churches and other social institutions.

According to an article from the Center of Disease Control US (2010) it is suggested that bullies are identified as middle school, high school and college students with social anxiety, depression, social isolation, nervousness, low self-esteem, deficits in school performance and impaired health (Center Of Disease Control, 2010). It further elaborates and identifies cyberbullying behaviors by the following examples: Sending someone mean or threatening emails, instant messages, or text messages, excluding someone from an instant messenger buddy list or blocking their email for no reason, tricking someone into revealing personal or embarrassing information and sending it to others,

breaking into someone's email or instant message account to send cruel or untrue messages while posing as that person, creating websites to make fun of another person such as a classmate or teacher, using websites to rate peers as prettiest, ugliest, among others.

It is important for the media, internet, literature, hospitals, churches, and the board of education continue to educate the public about cyber bullying and offensive discourse in cyberspace. According to Irving Janis' (1972) groupthink concept, cyberspace interaction is not a social activity done alone but more so dictated by group socialization. This simply means that it is the behavior for people to roam the internet but not alone. Rather, their internet usage is gauged by group settings, found through social networking sites like Facebook, Myspace and Twitter. These groups' settings then permit them to engage in activities that may reflect cyberbullying and unpleasant communication - which may lead life altering negativities such as poor academic performance, reckless sexual behavior, un-wanted pregnancies, low self-esteem, rapes, and suicide -referred to as cyberbullicide-suicide indirectly or directly influenced by experiences of online aggression" (Hinduja & Patchin, 2010, p. 1).

Social media in Kenya has become an essential part of almost everyone's lives; it affects how people conduct themselves online and even the language used in daily activities. Conversely with the notch high posts on leading online platforms like Facebook, most companies are opting for an easier way of increasing reach for specific page updates by



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leveraging on trending online topics. This has prompted the rise to cyber-bullying; facilitating publishing materials about victims severely defaming and humiliating them. It isn't something that anyone or large corporate would want to be associated with but ironically in Kenya, many companies and personalities actively take part in ill by quickly aligning their digital content to a widely known unrelated trending topic.

### **Cyber bullying in the Workplace; effects and reactions**

Most people spend a lot of time at their workplaces and therefore this environment need to be conducive to enhance productivity but this may not be the case all through due to cyberbullying- a form of mental harassment that arises regardless of the gender, race, profession etc. Generally Cyberbullying in the Workplace takes form of offensive emails or text messages containing jokes or inappropriate wording towards a certain race or sexual preference which have a direct effect on the target of the bullying act, threatening email being sent to the target anonymously or not, a feedback that is copied and pasted for the whole office to see while its initial intention was meant to be secret, changing someone's screensaver or desktop to offend or manipulate them, sharing embarrassing situations relating to the target with everyone online, being offensive and mean to the target on various social media websites and networks, spreading rumours or gossip online which could have a serious effect of a fellow co-workers

career or overall wellness and the list goes on.

With accessibility to online communication systems like mobile phones employees can use social media platforms to engage in inappropriate behaviour well beyond the confines of the physically defined workspace. It is very rare to hear of an employee who has not encountered cyberbullying unless in the nature of nonprofit organisations and with very limited reliance on technology within the organisation. Most of the time employers tend to shrug off the case of cyberbullying as they do not understand how such a social problem can affect the well-being of their employees, thus, their ability to produce and give the output they should be giving. The direct effect that cyber-bullying has on the target can cause the workplace to be unproductive and very stressful. (West, Foster, Levin, Edmison, Robibero, 2014). Cyber Bullying in the Workplace needs to be addressed through promoting a work environment that refuses to nurture a bully.

The workplace needs to issue a firm policy against bullying generally and cyber-bullying specifically. The bully needs to be encouraged to seek professional help as well. From the target's side, it is better not to share personal information with co-workers; many people have resorted to not having co-workers interact with them on social media websites.

Since Cyber Bullying in the Workplace is relatively new on the list issue one faces in a workplace, employers have not yet figured a way

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of drafting it in their office policy (Bettina et al., 2014). When it is mentioned, it is usually under the clause of bullying altogether, which is a good step towards tackling the issue but should not be the final one. Of course, you cannot fully control what people say online about you but you can grant people you do not trust limited access to your information. Most company managers do not understand much about ICT and the effect of cyberbullying and therefore drafting anti cyberbullying policies becomes a big challenge.

The workplace environment plays a crucial part in determining what is acceptable and what is unacceptable to say or do to another staff member. An office that promotes a positive atmosphere towards acts of harassment or bullying will most likely be open to negative comments and remarks being made about a fellow employee online (Foster et al 2014).

There are different ways that cyberbullying is projected at the work place. Borrowing partial leave from West et al (2014); the disgruntled employee. The most common example of cyberbullying behaviour, involves employees' posting inappropriate comments online about their co-workers, their managers or about the organization in general. Sometimes people will send snapshots of their employee's postings on Facebook or making inappropriate comments about a colleague on Facebook, whatsapp groups, telegram or even twitter among others ridiculing them and/or threatening them. In the manager-subordinate context, people have posted

comments about their boss on their personal Facebook pages, calling them out, and that can be interpreted in a really negative way, and it starts offending as people keep commenting on it. This may be common among junior staff and especially if they feel harassed by their seniors. The juniors feel they have very little to lose and their immaturity makes them feel like they are just having fun with no repercussions, especially in places like call centre or support desks. But the game or joke may be extended too much ending up in the hands of the victim who may react to it with authority leading to people losing jobs in a revenge mission.

A joke online might be pushed too far – for example, an online communication that begins as innocent office chitchat, such as a joke circulated via e-mail. This can be devastating to an employee if s/he learns what has been written on social media about them, which may not have been intended to humiliate them in any way. A number of times it is about misunderstanding of the impact *versus* intention (West et al, 2014). Nevertheless, when the message escalates to the point where one or more individuals distinguish it as inappropriate or unwanted, then it moves from the realm of online chat to cyberbullying.

The broken office romance: There are cases of workplace romances that end poorly and ultimately lead to cyberbullying. One of the partners uses either company time or company online communication resources to engage in bullying behaviour toward his or her ex. Ex-boyfriends or girlfriends or basically ex-spouses get into stalking. Manager

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who is involved in romantic relationship with a junior with a promise possibly of a promotion or any other favours and then it fails to materialize may lead to online blackmail. The junior may use this opportunity to press for her "right" as per the initial agreement. Some may start sharing intimate pictures online as away to embarrass the manager. Sometimes you may not even be in full blown relationship but just a crash but the one in with a crash may use this opportunity to harass the other. In some case it may not even be the parties are at logger heads. One may open up his or her heart to a friend in person or online i.e. at times this may not only be with your colleagues in the office but at times it may extend to the public domain to which it wasn't intended. Consider the case of the #PolekwaMwirigi (Kenyans on Twitter, 2015); tweets, retweets and Facebook jokes and funny memes on Instagram and video's on Snapchat got into the veins of the world through Kenyans on Twitter (KOT) within a few minutes, influencers and corporates joined the bandwagon as well. With companies such as Durex, through their Kenyan twitter handle @DurexKE leading the conversation "No. we're not going to exploit @Mwirigi's pain for selfish use. That said we have a lube or two to smooth things out. #PoleKwaMwirigi" The hash tag trended for four days consecutively generating 40 million impressions. The hash tag #PoleKwaMwirigi started after one, Robert Kunga, popularly known as Mwirigi on Twitter received heartbreaking news that his crush Sharon Mundia, widely known as This

Is Ess because of her blog <http://www.thisisess.com/>, had gotten engaged. Her proposal got a lot of coverage from mainstream media too. Yuri Baraza, a renowned social media influencer tweeted Ice cream parlor chain, Cold Stone Creamery the following; "@ColdStoneKenya Do you have any comfort food? I have a friend who needs any consolation food at this trying period.#PoleKwaMwirigi" and they responded "@ArcherMishale @Mwirigi. We feel your pain. Perhaps this will help soothe your pain #PoleKwaMwirigipic.twitter.com/i1Jik4Qd50" and followed with a picture of a creamy ice cream words "chocolate is the health food FOR THE SOUL"

Corporate entities were not left out either in this "romance went sour" saga. Mobile network operator Airtel offered Mwirigi a phone line tweeting "@Mwirigi Communication is key in relationships. Can we offer you a line? #PoleKwaMwirigi" the message pasted on an image of a smiling lady and one of Kenya's leading broadcaster Nation television (NTV) also took part in the conversation, tweeting "We are never going to get engaged, tune in to #AuntieBoss! No one can turn on your world like we do" #PoleKwaMwirigi". Fast food restaurant Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC) tweeted "@Mwirigi you may have missed the chic but we've got more breasts and thighs. #Pole Kwa Mwirigi. The posed question is; Is this not a form of bullying? Cyber-bullying is not different from any other type of bullying; it makes the victim have a low self-esteem, and in extreme causes it can also lead to suicide - as outlined in a



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case ahead. I believe this must have mortified Mwirigi and his situation didn't get better after the lady went ahead to get married leave alone the engagement. One wonders why the Kenyan government didn't take into account those corporate and individual those were caught up in mortifying Mwirigi? This must have caused a detrimental effect to the gentleman and where he was working there must have been a lot of ridicule affecting his work and even social life. The shame that followed him everywhere because of the publicity of his "failed" love.

The dysfunctional team; sometimes when working in large and sometimes diverse teams there is an expectation of one or more employees fall out of favour with their work team, which then leads to team members' using social media to post negative statements about the banished member(s). This team members are normally hired and train together, they have same hours and workspaces, and this continues for a financial period possibly until they move to different teams and shifts. These teams do either get along or they don't, and one may come across a situation where an employee complains of harassment and this is because of falling out of favour with the group, and all the individuals had taken to commenting on social media tools. This interferes with ones concentration in the place of work lowering their productivity.

The power-tripper; In this perspective, cyberbullying occurs as a result of a noxious manager-subordinate or colleagues in a relationship, where one individual attempts to establish undue or inappropriate authority over the

other. One thing that you may notice is that people are overworked, so you do notice a lot of cyber-harassment cases between managers and employees, because a lot of stress is involved...especially in a professional services firm. People will feel so fortunate to have a job they do put up with a lot. (West et al., 2014).

The impact on adults can be disastrous from home to office. Rising domestic temperatures that may be carried to office and vice versa. Impact on production can be caused by falsified messages, images, sexual harassment by colleagues and unknown people. Sexual harassment may cause a big embarrassment that may make a victim 'coil' and lose concentration on their work area. Some may hide (even in comfort rooms), if they have to work online and cyberbully keeps sending messages through whatsapp, email, messenger among other this causes destruction. Some victims seek sympathy from friends online and may keep checking online messages to see who are taking their side. Some try to fight back by spending time trying to justify their act (CASE....a lady who committed suicide in kilimani) when no sympathizers and when overwhelmed they get deep into depression which may lead to suicide. Some of the cyberbullies are not immediate colleagues but people you work for, entertain or providing the service to.

Consider the following cases of celebrities who were cyberbullied:

Few years back in may 2013 Lynda Nyangweso fell under cruel attack after her photograph was displayed on twitter. A section on online attackers behind screen seized the opportunity to

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mock the talented radio presenter over her weight. One cruel tweet read "That MoMokward MoMoment when Linda Nyangweso books a table for 2 ok, Linda Nyangweso makes Kalekye look like a model, ukipiga Linda Nyangweso picha, instead ya format ya JPEG, Inajisvae format ya JPIG, Linda Nyangweso discussion is such a weighty issue..."

Her comment was simple "OMG woke up this morning to realize people have discovered my secret: I'M FAT". In October 2014, kiss FM Presenter Adelle Onyango was a victim of sadistic cyberbullying after a social media user compared her to a monkey. The person posted a photoshopped meme with an insulting juxtaposition of a monkey next to her. Another posted "You are pretty, very pretty, just fix your teeth. I am sure you can more than afford it...." Adelle Responded by tweeting. " I don't describe to your definition of beauty or perfection. How sad must your life be to go around pointing out at what people have to change about themselves? I pray that you get over whatever insecurities your life is drenched in and seek life not perfection. I like my teeth just fine."

In October 2015 while at Citizen TV Janet Mbugua was attacked on social media during her pregnancy by personalities who did not think she was supposed to be on air with her baby bump. She simply responded to bullies by saying: People like you are a shame to society. I'm proud of my pregnancy as are other women. Your ignorance is wanting."

One popular gospel artist Jimmy Gait was under attack in June 2016 after his release of a song titled "Yesu ndiye

Sponsor" (Sponsor being a name corrupted by Kenyans to mean a man or a woman especially elderly ones who finance the lifestyles of younger men or women for sexual favours.) People felt his choice of the title of the song was disrespectful to God. This bashing made him shade tears on a national TV – NTV when narrated about his critics and how they forgot the good he had done in the past make him look like trash. In 2016 former Citizen TV anchor Julie Gichuru was attacked by some Kenyans on social media who believed being a role model and a respectable public figure shouldn't have been involved in betting and especially paying very low bonuses by his company Mcheza to gamers. She was accused of even being a partaker of her father-in-laws corrupt deals – Samuel Gichuru Whom human rights activist Bonface Mwangi stated "Ever heard Julie Gichuru condemning corruption? She lives in a glass house. Her father is wanted in Jersey, her husband is suing Robert Alai (a blogger). Samuel gichuru won't be buried with what he stole from Kenya. He destroyed lives and economy. Gichuru (Julie etc.) will inherit stolen loot." When hashtag #StandwithJuliegichuru came up she stated. "Nimezoea hawa watu wa chuki, uongo na domo (I am used to haters, liars with empty talks). When they try to knock you, He lifts you up. The more they hate, the more love you receive"

From the above case we can see the effects of cyberbullying in our professional duties by people we know and those we don't know. It pains, humiliates and destroys. Some work like the devil who came to steal, kill and

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destroy as written in the Bible (John 10:10)

Some people may be strong enough to defending themselves or fight back but some will just weep while others will even take their lives. Cases in reference: Consider the case of Belinda Akinyi who committed suicide by throwing herself into oncoming traffic near kabete Police station on waiyaki way after having taken her daughter and househelp on an "outing". She was bullied on facebook by a popular facebook group; Buyer beware – Kenya (ORIGINAL) with about 87,000 members, after posting about the defilement of her three-year-old daughter. Unfortunately the police officer who was assigned the case demanded for sex favour before helping her and out of desperation she gave in. But after sleeping with her, the officer disappeared, aggravating her stress. "Brenda has been going through a lot and she was always online and depression was eating into her for lack of help," said Ms Nyakerario (one of her close friends). "They bashed and ridiculed her and she felt the world was against her." Some of her friends who are members of the group said that in the week leading to her death, some members of the group had stepped up attacks against Ms Akinyi, with their line of argument being that she was faking the defilement story.

Aliah D. Wright (2016) Last month's (April 2016) discovery of the body of a 31-year-old firefighter in Virginia's Shenandoah National Park after a near week-long search led to the determination that she had committed suicide and that she had been the victim

of cyberbullying-likely by her co-workers-for years. An investigation into the anonymous online postings, in which the Fairfax County, Va., firefighter was called disparaging names is currently underway.

Nicole Mittendorff's supervisors said they were unaware if her co-workers were bullying her on an online community forum. Her supervisors have not said whether she was bullied in person at work.

The unfortunate thing is that we tend to trash people we don't particularly like is not new and especially with the introduction of telecommunication system making it easier to inflict widespread damage through the spread of rumors, outright lies or compromising photos. It is hard to imagine that working adults operate this way, but with the growing use of technology. (SHRM, 2016). The Workplace Bullying Institute's 2014 U.S. Workplace Bullying Survey found that 6.5 million workers said they were affected by bullying in the workplace. Sixty-one percent of respondents said their employer failed to react to abusive conduct. As a result, the bullying stopped once those targeted either quit, were forced out or were fired. Twenty-nine percent reported that they contemplated suicide. Bullying can lead to more than the loss of a job. People experience neurological changes when they're bullied at work, said Robyn Bartlett, a crisis transition coach and founder and CEO of Life Transition Experts in an interview with (SHRM, 2016). This clearly confirms that bullying hurts a business in a great way. "While I have not yet seen any stand-alone statistics about the costs of adult

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cyberbullying, bullying in the aggregate results in lost productivity, increased absences, higher turnover and increased medical costs due to the increased stress at work," said Teresa Daniel, dean of the Human Resource Leadership Program at Sullivan University in Louisville, Ky.. "It is a form of psychological violence that can and does seriously damage the health and well-being of affected employees. It can also poison an organization by undermining employee morale and by eroding any sense of loyalty, trust or teamwork."

There is no one approach to ending or preventing cyberbullying. The most promising strategies generally fall into four major categories: Changes to the organization and its culture, strategies to help strengthen individual managers and leaders, support services for the targets of bullying and accountability measures to coach, counsel and discipline bullies.

Human Resource happens to be the first point of contact for a complaint of bullying, employees need clear policies about what is tolerable and intolerable behavior. In a case of cyberbullying issue in the workplace it is important to investigate and resolve the problem; present the person who is the object of the bullying help with coping and stress management strategies; support via the company's employee assistance program; and access to counseling, coaching and employee benefits. (SHRM, 2016). For the bully it's important for HR and the employee's manager to intervene early. It is important to make them realise that they need help for their own healing under clearly defined policies to avoid

this from recurring but forced by circumstance the solution will termination.

### **Protection and laws**

There are laws that only address online harassment of children or focus on child predators as well as laws that protect adult cyberstalking victims, or victims of any age. Currently, there are 45 cyberstalking (and related) laws on the books. The Global Cyber Law Database (GCLD) aims to become the most comprehensive and authoritative source of cyber laws for all countries. Cyberbullying has criminal consequences just as physical bullying. A target's understanding of why cyberbullying is happening is helpful to remedy and take protective action to restore remedy. Among factors that motivate stalkers are: envy, pathological obsession (professional or sexual), unemployment or failure with own job or life; intention to intimidate and cause others to feel inferior; the bully is delusional and believes he/she "knows" the target; the Cyberbully wants to instill fear in a person to justify his/her status; belief they can get away with it and no traces can be found at all. In Kenya Cyber- bullying can earn you 10 years in prison; a man simulating hacking into a computer. Harassing and stalking someone on Facebook or Twitter can now earn you a 10-year prison sentence or a Sh20 million fine or both. This follows Cabinet's approval of the Computer and Cybercrimes Bill 2016, that spells out stiff penalties for digital crimes including illegal breach of systems and networks, cyber-bullying and stalking among others. "A person who, individually or with other persons,

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willfully and repeatedly communicates, either directly or indirectly, with another person or anyone known to that person, commits an offence, if they know or ought to know that their conduct is likely to cause those persons apprehension or fear of violence to them or damage or loss on that persons' property detrimentally affects that person," reads Section 14 of the Bill in part.

Cyber security and protection act (2016) Section 27 states. A person who intentionally transmits or causes the transmission of any communication through a computer system or network to bully, threaten or harass another person, where such communication places another person in fear of death, violence or bodily harm, commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding five years or a fine not exceeding two hundred thousand shillings or both. 28. A person who transfers, publishes, or disseminates, including making a digital depiction available for distribution or

downloading through a 'telecommunications network or through any other means of transferring data to a computer, the intimate image of another person commits an offence and is liable, on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding thirty years or fine not exceeding three hundred thousand shillings or both.

In conclusion it confirms the great impact of cyberbullying to the adults, employees and the general public for the government to come up with laws to save the situation. Organisations are now getting more concerned about the effect of the same on production and general staff performance and psychological effect. HR departments must keep close monitoring of the staff use of online resources and identify any negative effects that may arise. Cyberbullying should be minimized if not eliminated to create a conducive environment keeping all employees sober and relaxed and productive. Appreciate the trauma caused by cyberbullying and be one to stop it.



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